

**Office of the  
Attorney General**

# **How to Contact Your State Legislators**



**JUNE 2003**

**LAWRENCE WASDEN**  
Attorney General  
Statehouse  
Boise, ID 83720-0010  
[www.ag.idaho.gov](http://www.ag.idaho.gov)



# **State of Idaho**

## **Office of Attorney General**

### **Lawrence Wasden**

Dear Fellow Idahoans:

As Americans, we are blessed to live in a republican nation, the hallmark of which is the peaceful, orderly transition of government subject to the will of the people. Within Idaho, our voices are heard through a citizen legislature, composed not of professional politicians, but of ordinary citizens directly accountable to the local voters in communities throughout our state.

After nearly twenty years practicing law, I am firmly convinced of the wisdom of the framers of our Constitution. Working with an idealistic vision of a representative democracy, they created a democracy centered on three branches of government; the legislative branch to make the laws, the executive branch to implement and administer laws, and the judicial branch to oversee the administration of the laws. More than 200 years later, no one has brought forth a more lasting or fundamentally equal form of government.

Of course, our democratic form of government falls flat unless citizens participate. Your voice is most effective when you exercise your right to vote and when you communicate your policy desires to your elected representatives in the Idaho Legislature.

I hope this guide will be helpful in your efforts to continue to make Idaho a beacon of liberty and justice for all.

LAWRENCE G. WASDEN  
Attorney General

## **First things first:**

- Know whom to contact.
- Know where to contact.
- Know how to draft a letter that best represents your concerns and issues.

## **Whom to contact**

- Idaho is divided into 35 legislative districts. The voters in each district elect one senator and two representatives. Contact the three legislators who represent the district in which you live. Because you are their constituent, your opinions matter the most to them.
- If you don't know your state legislators' names or which district you live in, call the office of your county clerk and ask for voter information. You'll find the phone number in the government pages of your local telephone book.
- The Legislative Services Office publishes a "Legislative Directory" containing information about state legislators. The directory includes committee assignments for each legislator and legislators' addresses, e-mails, and phone and fax numbers. Call Legislative Services at 208/334-2475 to order a copy of the directory.

- The Idaho Legislature's website [www.state.id.us/legislat](http://www.state.id.us/legislat) contains additional information about legislative districts and contacting legislators.

## Where to contact

- During annual legislative sessions – January through March or April – you can write to your legislators at the State Capitol Building, P.O. Box 83720, Boise, ID 83720. You can also leave messages for your legislators at the Legislative Information Center. 208-332-1000 or 800-626-0471.
- When the legislature is not in session, Idaho's legislators are back at their homes and businesses and do not maintain offices at the state capitol. To reach your legislators between sessions, you must write or call them at their homes or businesses.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Your Address \_\_\_\_\_

Your City, State, Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Representative's or Senator's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Representative or Senator (Last Name): \_\_\_\_\_

Body of Letter \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Sincerely,

*(Signature in blue or black ink)*

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosures:

(List what you are enclosing, if anything.)

## What to say

- **Length** - Your letter should be brief and to the point, not longer than one page.
- **What is your concern**– Tell your legislator who you are and why you are writing to him or her. If your letter relates to a specific piece of legislation, it helps to identify it by the bill number. If you support or oppose a bill, say so clearly.
- **Points**– Choose the three points you feel are the most effective in helping your legislator understand your position.
- **Personalize it**– Let your legislator know why this matters to you and your family. If you have a personal story that shows how this issue affects your community, include the story in your letter.

Funds collected by the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Unit as the result of enforcement actions paid for this pamphlet. No tax monies were used to pay for this publication.

The Consumer Protection Unit enforces Idaho's consumer protection laws, provides information to the public on consumer issues, and offers an informal mediation process for individual consumer complaints.

If you have a consumer problem or question, please call 208-334-2424 or in-state toll-free 1-800-432-3545. TDD access and Language Line translation services are available. The Attorney General's web site is available at [www.ag.idaho.gov](http://www.ag.idaho.gov).